



Minutes City of Tempe Transportation Commission February 10, 2004

Minutes of the City of Tempe Transportation Commission held on Tuesday, February 10, 2004, 7:30 a.m., at the City of Tempe Public Works Conference Room, 31 E. Fifth St., Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Steve Bass, Don Cassano, Gerry DaRosa, Beth Fiorenza, Dave Hanna, Pen Johnson, Judi Nelson, Rich Nolan, Amanda Ormond, Mike Patten (Chair)

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Kirk Deem, Pete Glass, Mark Mourey, Kevin Olson

City Staff Present:

Gary Davis, Fred Brittingham, Carlos de Leon, Gregg Kent, Glenn Kephart, Amanda Nelson, Bonnie Richardson, Larry Schmalz, Larry Shobe, Dilanna Willstead, Robert Yabes

Guests Present:

Phil Amorosi (APAC); Chris Fanning (student); Wulf Grote (Valley Metro Rail); Roy Hoyt (Bicycle Advisory Committee); Steve Nielsen (ASU); Bob Stafford (TABA)

Mike Patten, Transportation Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:36 a.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Consideration of Meeting Minutes

Don Cassano moved to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2004 Transportation Commission meeting, the January 5, 2004 Public Involvement/Marketing Committee meeting, and the November 10 and November 24, 2003 Planning and Project Review Committee meeting. Motion was seconded by Pen Johnson. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances

Phil Amorosi stated that he was here today on behalf of APAC. He stated that APAC had met and discussed paved vs. ballasted track. The consensus from the APAC members is that the redevelopment planned for Apache Blvd. will be a significant investment for the City of Tempe and business owners. The aesthetics will play a large role in attracting future development opportunities and paved track is more aesthetically pleasing.

Bob Stafford, president of TABA, stated that he was present today on behalf of TABA. He stated that the Apache business owners believe that light rail will be good for Apache Blvd. However, the overriding opinion is that they would prefer paved track over ballasted track.

Agenda Item 3 – Light Rail Issues/Updates

Carlos de Leon stated that President Bush has just released his fiscal year 2005 budget which includes the funding recommendation for the Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Transit Project. It is recommended that the project receive a full federal funding commitment of \$75 million and a full funding grant agreement.

Transit Center

Bonnie Richardson provided an update on the status of the downtown Transit Center and reviewed schematics of two potential floor plans. Both designs include Transportation Division office space, transit store, retail, bike facilities, public restroom facilities and a 2,000 sq. ft. community meeting space. Staff is recommending that child care be removed as an option for this building due to space constraints and cost effectiveness. Bonnie added that the main difference between Schematic A and Schematic B is that Schematic B emphasizes the community meeting facility as a form that extend out away from main building footprint. In this scheme the community meeting room would be on the second floor and could be accessed by stair and elevators. This design uses the building form to shade the public space below, which will be used by transit and retail patrons. Scheme A maintains all functions within the footprint of the rectangular building.

General Discussion

Rich Nolan requested that the staircase be relocated and that the main access to the community room be from elevators which could be relocated to the front of the building. This falls into the universal design concept that the City is recommending to help remove access barriers. Bonnie replied that the design is still in the early stages and all efforts will be made to provide safe, adequate access while keeping the site constraints in mind.

Pen Johnson asked if the community room would be divided into smaller spaces. Bonnie responded that it will be able to be divided into at least two and possibly three separate spaces.

Mike Patten stated that he liked the distinction of Schematic B where the community room is pulled away from the main building.

Gerry DaRosa asked if there is a cost difference between the two designs. Bonnie replied that both designs would be within budget.

Amanda Ormond asked to what level of LEEDS the Transit Center is being designed. Bonnie responded LEED silver.

Dave Hanna made a motion that the Transportation Commission support the removal of the child care facility and recommends Schematic B, noting the concerns of the staircase access. Motion was seconded by Rich Nolan. Motion passed.

Community Outreach

Amanda Nelson stated that the Line Section 5 Open House was held on February 4 at the Holiday Inn-Tempe. LRT 95% plans were available for review along with initial concepts for the Transit Center and associated 5th and Farmer replacement parking. Attendance was strong and overall comments were positive.

Agenda Item 4 – ASU Master Plan Update

Steve Nielsen, ASU's Director of Campus Planning, reviewed ASU's Master Plan. Highlights and related transportation elements were as follows:

- Create a more transit/pedestrian friendly campus.
- New design for the University will be more inviting to the neighborhoods around the campus. Open the campus; improve thru-campus traffic by providing better pedestrian and bike facilities.
- Restructure each of the four campuses to narrow area of studies; e.g., ASU Main would focus on research and graduate studies; ASU West would be mainly a Liberal Arts College; and ASU East would focus on Engineering.
- ASU Main will grow to about 55,000 FTE students.
- Add student housing and move from a commuter campus atmosphere to a resident campus atmosphere. The total available student beds will be increased to 10,000 beds. The growth of the residence is focused on the Apache and McAllister area.
- As growth continues, build relationships with communities and keep community concerns in mind. Offer classes that promote better student citizenship.
- Reduce parking requirements and raise parking cost.
- Explore how future ASU parking and circulation needs can be met; e.g., add structures, introduce transit fee pass for faculty, staff, and students.
- The need for City and ASU partnership in responding to transportation and development issues within and around the campus.
- Implement regularly scheduled dialogue between the City and ASU regarding the development issues.

General Discussion

Steve Bass thanked Steve for the presentation. He asked if visitor parking was being addressed. Steve replied that visitor parking will be addressed later in the process.

Larry Shobe asked what the plans were for both sides of Rio Salado Parkway east of Rural. Steve responded that the area is still under study.

Glenn Kephart applauded Steve for the efforts towards building better ASU/City partnership. Glenn also raised the discrepancy between the projected square footage for the residences and that the numbers do not seem to support providing graduate student housing.

Agenda Item 5 – Pedestrian Overlay District Update

Fred Brittingham provided an update on the status of the Pedestrian Overlay District (POD). He stated that the POD was originally part of the Zoning Code rewrite. However, during the public process the POD element met some resistance from property and business owners. It was decided to pull the POD out, complete the Code rewrite, and then complete the POD and amend the Zoning Code. The revised procedure would give Tempe residents more opportunity to review and consider the Zoning Code and the POD. Fred added that the Code rewrite should be complete by May of this year and implementation should begin in June. Work on the POD may begin over the summer or possibly earlier.

General Discussion

Amanda Ormond asked about the resistance to the POD. Fred replied that there were concerns about the LRT requirements. Businesses were hesitant to commit now to the proposed regulations since the LRT won't be built for a few more years. The Transportation Commission referred the POD back to the Planning and Project Review Committee.

Agenda Item 6 – Transportation Update

Transportation Light Rail & Development Services Committee—meeting scheduled for February

17. Discussion items include the following:

- Downtown Transit Center design
- Light Rail Community Outreach update
- Light Rail Project update – possible discussion of paved vs. ballast track cost estimates

MAG Transportation Policy Committee—meeting will be held Wednesday, February 18; agenda will be transmitted via e-mail.

Valley Metro Rail—next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 11.

Valley Metro Board—meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17; agenda will be transmitted via e-mail.

Agenda Item 7 – Committee Reports

The following committee reports were provided:

Accountability and Governance Committee—meeting was rescheduled to Tuesday, February 17.

Public Involvement/Marketing Committee—meeting was held on Monday, February 2. The committee reviewed concepts for a new TV spot, which will be produced by summer. Next meeting will be Monday, March 1.

Planning & Project Review Committee—meeting was held in Monday, January 26. Draft minutes of that meeting were distributed for review. Items discussed by the committee include:

- I-10 Corridor Road Widening Project – committee and staff are working together to draft a letter to ADOT addressing concerns related to the project.
- Segway Transportation Issues (personal mobility devices) – committee discussed the issues and felt it would be better addressed by the Bicycle Committee. Bicycle Committee Chair Roy Hoyt has stated they will address related concerns.

Rich Nolan suggested that staff review freeway plans in other western, similar-sized cities to see what their future plans are. He added that no city is building 24-lane highways, and are instead leaning towards mass transit.

Carlos de Leon stated that Shannon Wilhemsen, former city of Tempe Governmental Relations Director, is the new community liaison for ADOT.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 23 3:30 p.m.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items

- LRT – Paved vs. Ballast Track
- LRT Bridge Design

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

The Commission's next regular meeting will be held Tuesday, March 9, 2004 at 7:30 a.m. in the City of Tempe Public Works Conference Room, 31 E. Fifth St., Garden Level West Wing.

Prepared by:
Dilanna Willstead

Reviewed by:

Carlos de Leon
Deputy Public Works Manager